

I'm always puzzled about why smart people make (and believe) such stupid arguments. We see this all the time, of course, in political discourse and family disagreements, not to mention department meetings, but since my field is religious studies I hear it the most in connection with the great religions of the world. Actually, I guess I find it less puzzling than aggravating.

A lot of conservative Christians get upset with me when I push them for evidence for their views, and so I thought I should devote this post to give equal share time to other religions whose self-appointed representatives send me proofs of the superiority of their views, based on hard "evidence." It is really difficult to believe that someone can actually be persuaded by these claims. Let me stress, I am NOT (repeat **NOT**) saying anything negative about any of these religions - in this case Christianity, Islam, and Hinduism. I'm decidedly not. I'm saying something negative about very bad arguments used to "prove" their inherent superiority to one another.

I will talk about two emails I have received, one in today's and one in tomorrow's. Today's came from a Muslim. If I had a nickel for every time a Muslim has written me with this same basic argument over the past three years, I could renovate my kitchen. I preface this by saying I have the utmost respect for Islam - truly and deeply; and for the Qur'an. Muslims and Islam itself are obviously getting horrible press these days in the world most of us inhabit, but almost entirely by people who don't know the first thing about it. I'm not going to go there - even when you beg me to - because this blog is about the New Testament and the origins of Christianity, centuries *prior* to Islam. But whatever you think about Islam and the fantastic numbers of people committed to it, this particular (common) argument for its superiority is not, well, thoughtful. Here's the email:

Would you like to see the rest of this post? It's a hot one. And not hard to access. Just join the blog. It costs all of about 50 cents a week, and every cent goes to charity. So what's to lose? Except for stupid arguments!

You need to be logged in to see this part of the content. Please [Login](#) to access.



[What About Accurately Preserved *Oral* Traditions?](#)
[Rapid Fire Questions and Answers on Biblical Manuscripts](#)